



Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Stewardship Council Meeting  
July 27, 2006  
Spectacle Island, Boston, MA

**Meeting Minutes**

*Stewardship Councilors in Attendance:* Chairman Dick Cross, Councilors Whitney Hatch, Julian Agyeman, Christina Crowley, Dan Wolf and Richard Ward.

*Public Attendees:* Roger Frymire, Cambridge resident; Heidi Ricci, Forest and Parks Partnership; Dick Miller, Lake Cochituate Advisory Council; Carole Berkowitz, Protect Our Water Resources; Joni Schneiderman, Protect Our Water Resources; Mike Ryan, Friends of the Fells; and Bruce Jacobson, National Park Service.

*DCR Staff in Attendance:* Commissioner Stephen Burrington, Tracy Lawrence, Tricia Singer, Marianne Fleckner, Marcos Pittore, Susan Kane, Andrea Lukens, Brendan Annett, Allan Miller, Nikki Belmonte, Joe Rotondo and Jack Donahue.

**I. Call To Order (1:25 p.m.), Chairman Cross**

- a. Before the meeting was called to order, the Council was welcomed by District Manager Susan Kane and was given a short history of Spectacle Island by the ranger staff.
- b. Chairman Cross reconfirmed three *Strategic Goals* which are: to have an agency capable of delivering world class conservation and recreation services; to demonstrate progress towards world class parks; and to generate public appreciation and support for the resources we manage.

**II. Commissioner's Report, Commissioner Stephen Burrington**

**a. Welcome to Spectacle Island**

- i. DCR worked with partners to overcome the complexities of opening the park, created with 3.7M cubic yards of Big Dig fill. The park is co-owned by DCR and the City of Boston, and is part of the Boston Harbor Islands National Park. Mass Highway is responsible for the landfill aspect of the park for next 20 years.
- ii. DCR staff working on issues such as raccoons and swales along road.

**b. July Maintenance Focus**

- i. Facility maintenance has been a huge theme, especially in the urban area. DCR faced a large challenge with a low number of staff and weather issues.
- ii. Maintenance standards are being put in place along with standard operating procedures to meet those standards.
- iii. DCR is acquiring the necessary equipment to keep the parks presentable and address the short term maintenance projects loaded into the FAMIS workflow system during this summer maintenance blitz.

**c. FY07 Budget**

- i. DCR entered FY07 with an increase in operational budget to \$88M, which comprises one-third of spending for agency. DCR also has \$30M supplemental budget, \$30M in trust and \$90-100M in capital funding.

**III. Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules**

**a. Finance Committee, Whitney Hatch**

- i. The Committee met to review the capital planning process with an eye on where the Stewardship Council fits in. The gap analysis presentation was also discussed. Next steps include working with DCR to figure out appropriate benchmarking.
  - ii. DCR saw a \$7M increase to the operational budget. There are lots of earmarks, many which are very helpful. Urban rink leases and resource management plan line items did not make it into the final budget. There is uncertainty on how Spectacle Island and the Charles River New Basin parks will be paid for.
  - iii. Councilor Wolf commented that once the steep learning curve and information gathering process concludes, the Committee will focus on advocacy.
- b. Policy Committee, *Julian Agyeman***
- i. There were no new updates. The Committee will be meeting next week to focus on the break down of over 100 DCR policies into previously described categories.
  - ii. The Committee also hopes to make a recommendation on the Historic Parkway Guidelines and examine how to firm up the public comment rules.
- c. Resource Management Plan Committee, *Julian Agyeman***
- i. There were no new updates. Councilor Agyeman complemented the efforts of Brendan Annett and other DCR staff on the Waquoit Bay resource management plan.

**VI. Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR) Resource Management Plan Adoption, *Brendan Annett, Acting Manager***

- a. Mr. Annett presented the resource management plan, which was previously distributed to the Council for review and can be accessed at [www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/rmp/rmp-wbnerr.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/rmp/rmp-wbnerr.htm). This RMP dually satisfies the requirement through DCR's RMP program as well as the federal requirement to revise the year 2000 RMP every 5 years.
- b. WBNERR is a component of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, a NOAA-state partnership of protected research sites. In 1995, an 8-way partnership was formed to purchase and protect the land across the watershed.
- c. Natural resources include estuarine systems, beach and barrier habitats, rare nesting shorebirds, coastal streams for migrating fish, coastal grasslands, freshwater wetlands and upland forests.
- d. In addition to unique recreational opportunities, WBNERR hosts researchers and students with a full lab and science classroom.
- e. Public comments on the RMP indicated that the nature center/interpretation services were very important to the community, but there were no significant changes requested. NOAA completed its second review of the document with only small editorial changes.

Councilor Agyeman Julian inquired about the differences or similarities between the NOAA and DCR RMP guidelines. Mr. Annett stated that the two formats fit well together.

Councilor Hatch commented that capturing restoration and mitigation values would be useful for other properties in the DCR system.

Councilor Agyeman motioned to approve the WBNERR RMP. Motion was passed with all in favor.

**VII. Salisbury Land Taking, Marcos Pittore, Assistant General Counsel**

- a. The Council was asked to exercise eminent domain for the acquisition of the Midgely lot, an in holding at Salisbury Beach State Reservation. This acquisition will eliminate the last parcel visible from the road and contact station in this area. The house currently on the property will be removed and restoration of the dunes and the view will be completed.  
*All in favor*

**VIII. Approval of Minutes from the May 25 Meeting – correct typo in section IIb (i) - *all in favor***

**IX. Public Comment**

- a. **Dick Miller**, from Lake Cochituate Advisory Council, invited DCR to visit the site of the proposed Cochituate rail trail. Mr. Miller also expressed his discontent that DCR will not attempt to acquire a parcel being surplus by the National Guard because the Town of Natick does not have money or staff to maintain such a property.
- b. **Heidi Ricci**, from the Forest and Parks Partnership, commended the Council on the forward progress it has made. Ms. Ricci also expressed her concern on communicating forest management decisions and dealing with invasive plant species that are moving into the areas. Commissioner Burrington remarked that the Director of External Affairs, Tracy Lawrence, and Forestry Chief, Jim DiMaio, are working on appropriate notification.
- c. **Bruce Jacobson**, from the National Park Service, commented on the positive working relationship NPS has experienced with DCR in the planning and operations of the Boston Harbor Islands. On Aug. 22, a workshop with partners to discuss the resource stewardship plan for the Islands will take place, including a discussion on protecting native populations and hiring a resource stewardship position.

***Meeting adjourned 2:40***